

Bachelor of Education

GPD 233 – Introduction to Special Education

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Acknowledgements

The University of Education, Winneba, Department of Special Education wishes to thank those below for their contribution in this Course Manual:

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Course outcomes



Outcomes

Upon completion of this course you will be able to:

- Identify pupils with exceptionalities in the regular classroom
- Plan instruction to meet the diverse needs of learners in the regular Classroom

Timeframe



How long?

Fourteen weeks



Lesson 1 – Definitions and concepts in Special Education

The concept of Exceptionality

- (a) The concept of exceptionality
- (b) Terms associated with exceptionality
 - Disability
 - Impairment
 - Handicap
- (c) Concept of Special Education & Relevance
 - Special needs education
- (d) Concept of Mainstreaming
 - Integration
 - Inclusion
 - Importance of inclusive Education
 - Obstacles to inclusive practice in Ghana
 - Promoting inclusive Practice in Ghanaian schools

Introduction

As individual individuals we differ from one another in so many ways. To address differences, every society creates descriptions to identify people who vary significantly from what is considered normal. This process is referred to as labelling. As a result a person labelled appears not to be “normal” or is considered exceptional.

Exceptionality

It is a comprehensive term used to describe any individual whose physical, mental, or behavioural performance deviates substantially for the norm, either higher or lower or positively or negative. These differences can be LDs, behaviour disorders, health disorders, speech, language disorders, sensory disorders (vision, hearing, mental) physical

handicap, gifted talented. A person described as exceptional is not necessarily a person with a handicap or disability.

(Use of normal bell curve to explain)

Common labels used to describe physical, or behavioural or sensory differences that relate to exceptionality are

DISORDER: It is the broadest of the terms which refers to a general malfunction of mental, physical, or psychological processes. It is defined as a disturbance in normal functioning.

1. **DISABILITY:** It is a more specific term that describes a loss of physical function (eg. Loss of sight, hearing or mobility) or from difficulty in learning and social adjustment that interferes with normal growth and development.
2. **HANDICAP:** It is a limitation imposed on the individuals either by his/her disability or by environmental factors.
3. **IMPAIRMENT:** It is any loss or abnormality in the functioning of the body. It is used interchangeably with disability.

• **SPECIAL EDUCATION.**

A set of instructions that is individually tailored to meet the unique needs of a child with exceptionality, taking into account the child's individual strengths and weaknesses in learning rather than following one set of curriculum as regular education does. Special Education is therefore specially designed and implemented instruction to meet the unique needs of individuals with exceptionalities.

• **SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION**

In the past Special education was defined in terms of children with a range of physical, sensory, intellectual or emotional difficulties. It has become plain that the concept has to be widened to include all children who, for whatever reason, are failing to benefit from school. In addition to children with impairments and disabilities the concept special needs education includes children who are:-

- Experiencing difficulties in school whether temporarily or permanently.
- Lacking interest and motivation in learning.
- Only able to complete one or two years of primary education forced to repeat grades.
- Forced to work.
- Living on the streets.



- Living too far from any school.
- Living in severe poverty or suffering from chronic malnutrition.
- Suffering continuing physical, emotional and sexual abuse.
- Simply not attending school.
- Pupils who are not performing in school
- Disadvantaged
- Pupil in War & Conflict Zones
- Children who are orphaned.

MAINSTREAMING

It is a carefully planned and monitored placement of handicapped or disabled children into regular education classrooms for the majority of their academic and social educational programme.

INTEGRATION

Used to refer to other planned interactions between mainstreamed and non-handicapped students- eg. The placement of a student labelled mentally retarded into a physical into a physical education class with their regular education peers twice a week.

INCLUSION

It is a movement to merge special or regular education and to include children with disabilities fully into the mainstream of education. It is therefore restructuring of school to include all learners. * It therefore creates an environment where all can live harmoniously and learn together to actualise their potential

What are the obstacles of Inclusion?

- Abused & Neglected
- Lack of teacher training.
- Lack of human and material resources.
- Lack of co-ordination between regular and special education systems and schools.
- Lack of acceptance and/ or understanding by society and it's representatives
- Large pupil-teacher ratio

- Unstructured school environment



Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit you will be able to:

- *Identify different categories of pupils with exceptionality in the regular classroom*
- *Plan instruction and teach to meet the differential needs of pupils*



Terminology

PUT YOUR TERMINOLOGIES HERE

Exceptionality

disability

impairment

handicap

Special Education

Special needs
education

Mainstreaming

inclusion

Unit summary



Summary

As a result of the increasing move towards inclusive education, teachers are now confronted with the challenges of teaching to the differential needs of all learners. This unit provides student-teachers an opportunity to study some of the terms and concepts associated with special education.

Assignment



Assignment

1. Distinguish between “ disability” and ” handicap”
2. What arguments would you advance for and against the practice of inclusive Education in Ghana?

Assessment



Assessment

1. 2 Assignments for 40%
2. End of semester Exam for 60%

Lesson 2 – Categories of Exceptionality

Mental Retardation / Intellectual Disabilities

- Definitions
- Classification
- Academic and learning Characteristics
- Educational Implications for teachers
- Causes and preventive measures



Mental retardation is a condition- a state or nature of the development of the brain. It is not a disease even though the condition can result from a diseases or infections. Mental retardation is not contagious and cannot be transmitted like infectious diseases. Mental retardation is therefore a term that is used when a person has certain limitations in mental functioning and in skills such as communication, taking care of self and social skills. These limitations will cause a child to learn and develop more slowly than a typical child. The condition is incurable because not is neither a disease nor mental illness.

DEFINITION

Several proffesional disciplines have studied the condition of mental retardation over the years,each field of discipline looked at the concept from it's own perspective, and as a result several explanations were given, and changes were made over the years.

Today, the current definition of the condition was by an organization of proffesionals of varied backgrounds known as The American Association on Mental Retardation (AAMR).The AAMR in 1992 defined mental retardation as;

‘Mental retardation refers to limitations in present functioning. It is characterised by significantly sub-average intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with related limitations in two or more of the following applicable adaptive skill areas; communication, self-care, home living, social skills, community use, self-direction, health and safety, functional academics, leisure, and work. Mental retardation manifests itself before age 18’ (Hardman, Drew & Eghan, 1999).

KEY ELEMENTS

The definition contains certain key issues. These are:

Substantial Limitations in Present Function:- This refers to a fundamental difficulty in learning and performing certain daily life skills. The personal capabilities in which there must be substantial limitations are conceptual, practical, and social intelligence. These three areas are specifically affected in children who have the condition of mental retardation

It is characterized by significantly sub-average intellectual functioning;- this is most often measured using an intelligence quotient (I.Q.) test score below 70. This simply refers to poor academic performance across the school subjects.

EXISTING CONCURRENTLY;- This means that the intellectual limitations or poor academic performance occurs at the same time as the limitation in adaptive skills.

WITH RELATED LIMITATIONS;- The limitations in adaptive skills are more related to the intellectual limitations than to the other circumstances such as cultural or linguistic diversity or sensory limitations.

WHAT ARE ADAPTIVE SKILLS?:- Adaptive skill refers to the effectiveness or degree with which the individual meets the standards of personal independence and social responsibility expected of his/her age and group. For example the inability to accept social responsibility and care for oneself (tell time, deal with money, shop, travel alone, etc).

The disorder must manifest (set in) before age of 18 (developmental period). The 18th birthday approximates the age when individuals in society typically assume adult roles. If therefore an individual functions normally until age 18 and only after shows a decline, the individual is diagnosed as suffering from some form of dementia (a loss memory) rather than mental retardation (Holmes, 1991). Mental retardation normally affects individuals before 18years.

1992 AAMR classification

With the revised definition of the AAMR in 1992, a new classification system was developed. This focused on the type and extent of the individual would require to function in home and community – (Hardman, et al. 1999; Hewaed & Orlansky. 1992).

1. **Intermittent:-** supports are provided on an “as – needed basis” and characterised as episodic (occasionally and not regularly). Supports may be high or low intensity when provided.
2. **Limited :-** Supports are characterised by consistency; time required may be limited but not intermittent.
3. **Extensive:-** Supports are characterized by regular involvement (eg. Daily) in atleast some environments such as work or home; supports are not limited.
4. **Pervasive:-** support are characterized by constancy and high intensity and are provided across environments. They may be life sustaining in nature (Hardman, et al, 1999).

The change therefore in the classification systems centre on three issues.

Capabilities (competence), Environment, and Functioning

Intelligence Home, work, school, community Supports

Supports here refers to a means of coordinated set of services and accommodations matched to the person's needs. The AAMR's emphasis on these classification according to support is not only in terms of the level of assistance needed, but also by the type; formal and natural (Hardman, et al, 1999). Formal supports may be by government programmes such as in income maintenance, health care, education, housing, or employment. Another formal support is the advocacy organisations that lobby on behalf of these people.

Natural Supports:- this are provided by the nuclear and extended family members, friends, or neighbours.

Classification based on I Q

Mild

Moderate

Severe

Profound

Characteristics of persons with mental retardation

Characteristics: These are typical or noticeable qualities of retarded individuals. As mental retardation is not a homogeneous entity, typically or noticeable qualities also vary according to the degree or severity of the individual's condition. Significant characteristics of retarded persons focus on certain key areas such as academics, motivation, intellectual, physical or motor, social, and speech and language.

Academic characteristics: All categories of children with mental retardation normally experience significant deficits in academic areas such as reading, mathematics or arithmetic, and spelling. Reading is considered the weakest area of their learning, especially reading comprehension.

Those individuals with mild retardation are better at decoding words than understanding their meaning. They almost always read at grade level.

Arithmetic skills are also deficient. They may be able to learn basic computational skills but are unable to apply the concepts appropriately.

They lack motivation to learn as a result of continues failure. This results in Learned helplessness – they tend to think that no matter how hard they try they will never succeed.

Learning / intellectual Characteristics

A number of characteristics have been identified to affect the learning process of individuals with mental retardation. The severer the mental retardation/ intellectual disabilities the severer the effect on the individual's ability to acquire and use knowledge.

1. Attention Deficits
2. Problems with abstract concepts
3. Poor memory
4. Problems metacognition
5. Problems with transfer and generalisation skills
6. Lack skills in incidental learning
7. problems with understanding and expressing thoughts

Strategies for improving Pupil's learning

- Provide regular exercises or practice to facilitate recall
- Minimise distractions during teaching and learning interactions
- Let pupils experience success
- Concretize teaching and learning experiences
- Lessons must be interesting and interspersed with simple activities
- Give lots of praise to motivate pupils to learn.

Prevention of Mental Retardation

- Immunization against disease
- Proper maternal nutritional habits before and after delivery.
- Avoidance of sexually transmitted diseases
- Avoiding child abuse and neglect
- Avoiding negative socio cultural practices
- Proper dieting and child care practices.



Upon completion of this unit you will be able to:



Outcomes

- *Identify individuals with mental retardation in the regular classroom*
- *State five academic and learning characteristics of individuals with mental retardation/ intellectual disabilities in the regular classroom*
- *Plan instruction and teach to meet the differential needs of pupils with mental retardation / intellectual disabilities*



Terminology

PUT YOUR TERMINOLOGIES HERE

Learned Helplessness

A situation in which the individual thinks that no matter how he/she tries he/she would not succeed

Unit summary



Summary

Mental retardation is a condition, it is not curable. These individuals can be assisted to overcome the challenges they face during teaching and learning interactions.



Assignment



Assignment

1. What is the distinction between mental retardation(intellectual disabilities) and mental illness?
2. Identify and discuss five learning /academic characteristics of individuals with mental retardation(intellectual disabilities).
3. To what extent is it true to state that mental retardation can be prevented.

Assessment



Assessment

Put your Assesment here

Lesson 3 – Hearing Impairment

Hearing Impairment

- Definition
- Identification / Characteristics / Classification
- Educational Implications for teachers
- Causes and preventive measures





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Upon completion of this unit you will be able to:

- *Put your outcomes*



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Assignment

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Assessment

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COURSE GUIDE

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Exceptionality

disability

impairment

handicap

Special Education

Special needs
education

Mainstreaming

inclusion

Unit summary



Summary

Put your Summary here

Assignment



Assignment

3. Distinguish between “disability” and ”handicap”
4. What arguments would you advance for and against the practice of inclusive Education in Ghana?

Assessment



Assessment

3. 2 Assignments for 40%
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Exceptionality

disability

impairment

handicap

Special Education

Special needs
education

Mainstreaming

inclusion

Unit summary



Summary

Put your Summary here

Assignment



Assignment

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Assessment



Assessment

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Lesson 2 – Categories of Exceptionality

Mental Retardation / Intellectual Disabilities

- Definitions
- Classification
- Academic and learning Characteristics
- Educational Implications for teachers
- Causes and preventive measures



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Outcomes

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Learned Helplessness

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Unit summary



Summary

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Assignment



Assignment

Put your Assignment here

Assessment



Assessment

Put your Assesment here



Lesson 3 – Hearing Impairment

Hearing Impairment

- Definition
- Identification / Characteristics / Classification
- Educational Implications for teachers
- Causes and preventive measures



Upon completion of this unit you will be able to:



Outcomes

- *Put your outcomes*



Terminology

PUT YOUR TERMINOLOGIES HERE

Unit summary



Summary

Put your Summary here



Assignment



Put your Assignment here

Assignment

Assessment



Put your Assesment here

Assessment

Lesson 4 – Visual Impairment

Visual Impairment

- Definition
- Identification / Characteristics / Classification
- Educational Implications for teachers
- Causes and preventive measures



Upon completion of this unit you will be able to:



Outcomes

- *Put your outcomes*



Terminology

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Unit summary



Summary

Put your Summary here

Assignment



Assignment

Put your Assignment here

Assessment



Assessment

Put your Assesment here



Lesson 5 – Learning Disabilities

Hearing Impairment

- Definition
- Identification / Characteristics / Classification
- Educational Implications for teachers
- Causes and preventive measures



Upon completion of this unit you will be able to:



Outcomes

- *Put your outcomes*



Terminology

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Unit summary



Summary

Put your Summary here



Assignment



Assignment

Put your Assignment here

Assessment















Assessment

Put your Assesment here

PUT COURSE CONTENT HERE AND CAN USE THE FOLLOWING
IDEVICES



Activity	Assessment	Assignment	Case study
 Discussion	 Group activity	 Help	 Note it!
 Outcomes	 Reading	 Reflection	 Study skills
 Summary	 Terminology	 Time	 Tip

Upon completion of this unit you will be able to:



Outcomes

- *Put your outcomes*



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Summary

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Assignment



Assignment

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Assessment



Assessment

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